United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1145
20 May 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council recommends to General Assembly the admission of Bosnia-Herzegovina to United Nations membership; Assembly to take up Council's recommendation on Friday, 22 May, together with recommendations to admit Slovenia and Croatia.

+ Secretary-General, addressing former international civil servants, calls for their support in promoting process of decentralization.

+ Secretary-General, in address to Trade Law Congress, stresses new prospects for standardizing commercial law in next century.

+ Fact-finding mission to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh rescheduled "for technical reasons"; mission to leave Athens tomorrow, 21 May.

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The Security Council recommended at a formal meeting this afternoon that the General Assembly admit Bosnia-Herzegovina to United Nations membership.

At a previous meeting this morning, the Council had decided to refer action on Bosnia-Herzegovina's application to the Committee on Admission of New Member States. The Council President, Peter Hohenfellner (Austria), proposed that the Committee meet immediately to consider the application.

The Council was acting in response to a letter from Bosnia-Herzegovina containing the application and a declaration by Haris Silajdzic, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia-Herzegovina, on behalf of the Presidency of the Republic, that his country accepted the obligations contained in the United Nations Charter and was willing to carry out those obligations.

The General Assembly is expected to take up the Security Council's favourable recommendation on Bosnia-Herzegovina on Friday, 22 May, together with the admissions of Slovenia and Croatia to United Nations membership.

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For information media—not an official record

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, addressing the annual meeting of the Association of Former International Civil Servants today, described the expansion of the United Nation's work, in a situation of inadequate funding and stretch personnel resources.

"Never before have its services been requested with such frequency, not only in its traditional role of peace-keeping and peace-making, but in new roles, including providing assistance to democratic institutions in countries of the third world. Never before have the expenses incurred by the United Nations in the service of peace been so great. And never before have we been in greater need of funds," he said.

Summing up the successes and failures of the Organization in the 141 days since he took office in January, he cited, among other issues, his optimism about the operation in Cambodia, the shipment of humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia and preparations underway for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June. Efforts which had been "less than successful", he said, included those in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Western Sahara and Libya.

He outlined the initiatives he had undertaken to streamline functioning and improve coordination within the United Nations system, with regional organizations and with non-governmental bodies around the world. Commenting on moves to decentralize the Organization's activities, he asked the former employees to help form a bridge with the non-governmental community, in whose work, he pointed out, many of them were now involved.

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Many United Nations member countries would like to see a political and economic transition that involved a substantial revision of the law in many areas, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali told the Congress on International Trade Law of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) on Monday, 18 May.

In his opening address to the Congress, he said such revision could serve as a necessary accompaniment to the positive trends and might also provide a remedy for the disturbing trends towards instability and conflict which many of the world's regions were currently experiencing.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the unification of international trade law was one means of promoting international trade and, at the same time, economic development. He warned against legal differences which could create a veritable labyrinth of norms in which only the most powerful could find their way.

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A United Nations spokesman announced today that the fact-finding mission to Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia had been rescheduled "for technical reasons". Mission members would leave Athens tomorrow, 21 May, for

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Armenia, and continue to Baku on 24 May. On 26 May, the misssion would go to Nagorno-Karabakh before returning to New York on Thursday, 28 May.

The mission was dispatched to the region by the Secretary-General to study ways of assisting the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in bringing about a peaceful solution to the conflict in the region. The Security Council welcomed the dispatch last week in a statement which called on the parties "to take all steps necessary" to bring an end to the violence in the region.

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